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Parish Employment and Wages in Louisiana – First Quarter 2017

Employment rose in 2 of the 7 largest parishes in Louisiana from March 2016 to March 2017, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties/parishes are those with 2016 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that the rate of job growth in Calcasieu Parish (1.8 percent) exceeded the U.S. average. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, employment advanced 1.6 percent from March 2016 to March 2017 as 299 of the 346 largest U.S. counties registered increases. York, S.C., had the largest percentage increase, up 6.8 percent over the year. Kanawha, W.Va., had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment among the largest counties in the U.S., with a loss of 2.7 percent.

Among the seven largest parishes in Louisiana, employment was highest in East Baton Rouge (268,700) in March 2017, followed by Orleans (191,700) and Jefferson (190,700). Together, Louisiana's seven large parishes accounted for 56.7 percent of the state's total employment. Nationwide, the 346 largest counties made up 72.8 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the first quarter of 2016 to the first quarter of 2017, East Baton Rouge recorded the greatest increase in average weekly wages among the large Louisiana parishes, with a gain of 7.7 percent. (See [table 1.](#)) Orleans had the highest average wage among the largest parishes at \$1,023 per week. Nationally, average weekly wages increased 6.6 percent over the year to \$1,111.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 57 parishes in Louisiana with employment below 75,000. Wage levels in five of these smaller parishes were above the national average. (See [table 2.](#))

Large parish wage changes

Average weekly wages rose in all 7 large Louisiana parishes from the first quarter of 2016 to the first quarter of 2017. East Baton Rouge Parish's 7.7-percent rise in average weekly wages ranked 73rd among the nation's 346 largest counties. (See [table 1.](#)) Weekly wages increased at rates of 6.4 percent in Jefferson Parish (170th) and 5.9 percent in Caddo Parish (210th). Over-the-year wage gains in the remaining four large parishes were 4.7 percent or less.

Among the 346 largest U.S. counties, 345 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. McLean, Ill., had the largest percentage wage increase among the largest U.S. counties, up 27.8 percent from the first quarter of 2016. Peoria, Ill., experienced the only percentage decrease in average weekly wages with a loss of 1.1 percent over the year.

Large parish average weekly wages

Weekly wages in all of the state's seven large parishes were below the national average of \$1,111 in the first quarter of 2017. However, average weekly wages in two of these Louisiana parishes were within 10 percent of the U.S. average and placed in the top half of the national ranking. Orleans (\$1,023) had the highest average weekly wage among the state's large parishes and ranked 141st in the country, followed by East Baton Rouge (\$1,009, 154th). Average weekly wages in the five remaining large parishes ranged from \$925 to \$814 and placed in bottom half of the national ranking.

In the first quarter of 2017, more than 70 percent of the largest U.S. counties (252) reported wages below the national weekly average of \$1,111. Cameron, Texas, reported the lowest wage (\$614), followed by Horry County, S.C. (\$628), and the Texas counties of Hidalgo (\$642) and Webb (\$675).

Among the nation's 346 largest counties, 93 registered weekly wages above the U.S. average. New York, N.Y., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,954. Santa Clara, Calif., was second at \$2,450, followed by San Mateo, Calif. (\$2,385), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$2,264). Average wages in the highest-ranked county, New York, N.Y., were more than four times the average wage in the lowest-ranked county, Cameron, Texas (\$614).

Average weekly wages in Louisiana's smaller parishes

For smaller parishes in Louisiana – those with employment below 75,000 – 52 of 57 reported weekly wages below the national average (\$1,111) in the first quarter of 2017. In the five remaining smaller parishes, wages not only exceeded the national average, but were also the highest in the state, ranging from \$1,491 in Cameron to \$1,319 in Plaquemines. East Carroll and Franklin Parishes had the lowest weekly wages in the state, both at \$558. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 64 parishes were considered, 6 reported average weekly wages of \$599 or less, 29 registered wages from \$600 to \$749, 11 had wages from \$750 to \$899, 10 had wages from \$900 to \$1,049, and 8 had wages of \$1,050 or more. (See [chart 1](#).) The higher-paying parishes were concentrated in the southern half of the state around the metropolitan areas of Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, and New Orleans. The lowest-paid parishes, those with weekly wages under \$600, were generally located in the northeastern quadrant of the state.

Additional statistics and other information

QCEW data for states have been included in this release in [table 3](#). For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit www.bls.gov/cew.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2016 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2017 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2016* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn16.htm. The 2017 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2018.

The County Employment and Wages release for second quarter 2017 is scheduled to be released on Tuesday, December 5, 2017.

Industry Changes

Beginning with this release, the QCEW program now uses the 2017 version of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) as the basis for the assignment and tabulation of economic data by industry. For more information on the change to NAICS, please see the Federal Register at www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/federal_register_notices/notices/fr08au16.pdf. For information on the use of the 2017 version of NAICS in QCEW, see www.bls.gov/cew/naics2017.htm.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.9 million employer reports cover 142.3 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised (see Technical Note below) and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 7 largest parishes in Louisiana, first quarter 2017

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2016-17 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, first quarter 2016-17 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	142,309.2	1.6	--	\$1,111	--	6.6	--
Louisiana	1,901.3	-0.5	--	906	33	5.5	43
Caddo, La.	112.8	-1.0	338	814	310	5.9	210
Calcasieu, La.	96.6	1.8	143	917	214	4.1	310
East Baton Rouge, La.	268.7	0.0	300	1,009	154	7.7	73
Jefferson, La.	190.7	-0.5	328	925	208	6.4	170
Lafayette, La.	129.2	-2.3	345	872	268	2.0	343
Orleans, La.	191.7	0.0	300	1,023	141	4.7	284
St. Tammany, La.	87.6	0.3	280	876	264	2.6	340

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all parishes in Louisiana, first quarter 2017

Area	Employment March 2017	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	142,309,185	\$1,111
Louisiana	1,901,295	906
Acadia	14,348	655
Allen	7,885	737
Ascension	43,752	1,101
Assumption	3,820	784
Avoyelles	11,026	605
Beauregard	8,198	793
Bienville	4,356	701
Bossier	43,201	728
Caddo	112,780	814
Calcasieu	96,620	917
Caldwell	2,381	644
Cameron	12,240	1,491
Catahoula	2,040	582
Claiborne	3,312	692
Concordia	5,346	635
De Soto	6,628	992
East Baton Rouge	268,668	1,009
East Carroll	1,746	558
East Feliciana	4,912	788
Evangeline	8,299	646
Franklin	4,650	558
Grant	3,224	764
Iberia	26,377	851
Iberville	16,269	1,381
Jackson	3,597	700
Jefferson	190,688	925
Jefferson Davis	8,264	671
La Salle	4,238	665
Lafayette	129,186	872
Lafourche	33,461	917
Lincoln	18,653	692
Livingston	27,174	737
Madison	3,294	575
Morehouse	6,800	591
Natchitoches	13,328	665
Orleans	191,721	1,023
Ouachita	70,928	787
Plaquemines	12,714	1,319
Pointe Coupee	4,853	660
Rapides	56,568	762
Red River	2,537	744
Richland	6,460	606
Sabine	5,060	657
St. Bernard	10,283	924
St. Charles	23,917	1,444
St. Helena	1,497	695
St. James	7,801	1,431
St. John the Baptist	14,587	1,074
St. Landry	23,349	662
St. Martin	11,980	757
St. Mary	21,106	936
St. Tammany	87,569	876
Tangipahoa	43,307	665
Tensas	951	661
Terrebonne	49,303	925

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all parishes in Louisiana, first quarter 2017 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2017	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Union	4,809	596
Vermilion.....	12,608	730
Vernon	13,125	726
Washington.....	10,908	673
Webster	11,226	700
West Baton Rouge	12,732	1,014
West Carroll.....	2,280	703
West Feliciana	5,570	1,090
Winn	4,581	675

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, first quarter 2017

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2016-17	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2016-17	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	142,309.2	1.6	\$1,111	--	6.6	--
Alabama	1,928.9	1.4	893	36	6.2	35
Alaska	312.8	-1.8	1,061	18	3.9	50
Arizona	2,743.0	2.4	991	21	8.1	4
Arkansas	1,199.9	0.7	859	45	8.5	3
California	16,831.4	2.3	1,295	6	7.6	7
Colorado	2,573.2	2.3	1,136	12	7.5	10
Connecticut	1,651.5	0.1	1,417	4	4.0	49
Delaware	433.2	0.8	1,185	9	10.7	1
District of Columbia	760.7	1.2	1,885	1	7.0	16
Florida	8,532.6	2.8	949	27	7.2	13
Georgia	4,317.1	2.7	1,068	17	6.1	37
Hawaii	653.6	0.9	954	25	6.8	22
Idaho	690.4	3.0	775	50	7.0	16
Illinois	5,842.0	0.5	1,195	8	6.3	34
Indiana	2,985.8	1.2	918	32	7.6	7
Iowa	1,518.3	0.0	899	35	6.5	30
Kansas	1,368.0	0.4	888	38	6.7	25
Kentucky	1,864.1	1.1	879	41	6.9	18
Louisiana	1,901.3	-0.5	906	33	5.5	43
Maine	586.7	1.0	860	44	7.2	13
Maryland	2,626.0	1.2	1,171	10	5.8	42
Massachusetts	3,464.0	1.1	1,428	3	7.7	6
Michigan	4,230.6	1.7	1,041	20	6.8	22
Minnesota	2,806.4	2.1	1,149	11	7.9	5
Mississippi	1,122.9	0.1	750	51	5.3	46
Missouri	2,767.0	1.4	930	31	5.9	38
Montana	451.5	1.4	800	49	6.5	30
Nebraska	960.7	0.4	868	42	6.4	33
Nevada	1,311.6	3.8	932	30	6.9	18
New Hampshire	643.2	1.2	1,070	16	7.3	11
New Jersey	3,955.1	1.5	1,333	5	5.0	47
New Mexico	803.3	0.2	838	46	5.9	38
New York	9,159.3	1.3	1,541	2	5.9	38
North Carolina	4,287.0	1.8	991	21	6.9	18
North Dakota	405.7	-1.0	953	26	5.0	47
Ohio	5,278.3	0.8	976	24	6.7	25
Oklahoma	1,563.9	-1.0	883	39	5.9	38
Oregon	1,855.0	2.5	984	23	5.4	45
Pennsylvania	5,712.3	0.8	1,078	15	6.5	30
Rhode Island	465.4	0.3	1,055	19	7.2	13
South Carolina	2,017.9	2.2	864	43	7.3	11
South Dakota	413.4	0.7	819	48	6.2	35
Tennessee	2,906.2	1.8	945	28	6.7	25
Texas	11,924.5	1.7	1,124	14	5.5	43
Utah	1,411.3	3.1	905	34	6.6	29
Vermont	305.6	0.2	889	37	6.7	25
Virginia	3,796.3	1.4	1,129	13	6.9	18
Washington	3,225.9	2.6	1,215	7	8.6	2
West Virginia	678.2	-0.8	837	47	7.6	7
Wisconsin	2,803.7	1.1	933	29	6.8	22
Wyoming	262.4	-2.3	880	40	3.3	51
Puerto Rico	887.7	-0.9	526	(3)	1.2	(3)
Virgin Islands	38.7	0.0	797	(3)	3.1	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by parish in Louisiana, first quarter 2017

